



The Tragedy of Coriolanus:

Actus Primus. Scena Prima.

Enter a Company of Murinous Citizens, with Staves,
Clubs, and other weapons.

1. Citizen.

Before we proceed any further, heare me speake.

All. Speake, speake.

1. Cit. You are all resolu'd rather to dy then
to famish?

All. Resolu'd, resolu'd.

1. Cit. First you know, Caius Martius is chiefe enemy
to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

1. Cit. Let vs kill him, and we'll haue Corne at our own
price. Is't a Verdict?

All. No more talking on't; Let it be done, away, away

2. Cit. One word, good Citizens.

1. Cit. We are accounted poore Citizens, the Patri-
cians good: what Authority sursets one, would relieue
vs. If they would yeelde vs but the superfluitie while it
were wholsome, wee might guesse they releuee vs hu-
manely: But they thinke we are too deere, the leanness
that afflicts vs, the object of our misery, is as an inuento-
ry to particularize their abundance, our sufferance is a
gaine to them. Let vs reuenge this with our Pikes, ere
we become Rakes. For the Gods know, I speake this in
hunger for Bread, not in thirst for Reuenge.

2. Cit. Would you proceede especially against Caius
Martius.

All. Against him first: He's a very dog to the Com-
monalty.

1. Cit. Consider you what Seruices he ha's done for his
Country?

1. Cit. Very well, and could bee content to giue him
good report for't, but that hee payes himselfe with bee-
ing proud.

All. Nay, but speake not maliciously.

1. Cit. I say vnto you, what he hath done Famously,
he did it to that end: though soft conscienc'd men can be
content to say it was for his Countrey, he did it to please
his Mother, and to be partly proud, which he is, euen to
the altitude of his vertue.

2. Cit. What he cannot helpe in his Nature, you ac-
count a Vice in him: You must in no way say he is co-
uetous.

1. Cit. If I must not, I neede not be barren of Accus-
ations he hath faults (with surplus) to tyre in repetition.

Shows within.

What shows are these? The other side a th City is risen:
why stay we prating heere? To th Capitoll.

All. Come, come.

1. Cit. Soft, who comes heere?

Enter Menenius Agrippa.

2. Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath al-
wayes lou'd the people.

1. Cit. He's one honest enough, wold al the rest wer so.
Men. What work's my Countymen in hand?

Where go you with Bats and Clubs? The matter
Speake I pray you.

2. Cit. Our busines is not vnknowne to th Senat, they
haue had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, &
now wee'll shew em in deeds: they say poore Suters haue
strong breaths, they shal know we haue strong arms too.

Menen. Why Masters, my good Friends, mine honest
Neighbours, will you vndo your selues?

2. Cit. We cannot Sir, we are vndone already.

Men. I tell you Friends, most charitable card
Haue the Patricians of you for your wants.

Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well
Strike at the Heauen with your stauces, as list them
Against the Roman State, whose course will on
The way it takes: cracking ten thousand Curbes
Of more strong linke asunder, then can euery
Appare in your impediment. For the Dearth,
The Gods, not the Patricians make it, and
Your knees to them (not armes) must helpe. Alacke,
You are transported by Calamity
Thether, where more attends you, and you slander
The Helmes o'th State; who care for you like Fathers,
When you curse them, as Enemies.

2. Cit. Care for vs? True indeed, they nere car'd for vs
yet. Suffer vs to famish, and their Store-houses cramm'd
with Graine: Make Edicts for Vsurie, to support Vsur-
ers; repeale daily any wholsome Act established against
the rich, and prouide more piercing Statutes daily, to
chaine vp and restraine the poore. If the Warres eate vs
not vype, they will; and there's all the loue they beare
vs.

Menen. Either you must

Confesse your selues wondrous Malicious,
Or be accus'd of Folly. I shall tell you
A pretty Tale, it may be you haue heard it,
But since it serues my purpose, I will venture
To scale't a little more.

2. Citizen. Well,

He heare it Sir: yet you must not thinke
To fobbe off our disgrace with a tale:
But and't please you deliuer.

Men. There was a time, when all the bodie members
Rebell'd against the Belly; thus accus'd it:
That onely like a Gulfe it did remaine

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FINIS

